

Nixon, Andrea (DPU)

From: Mayor Michael A. Tautznik [miket@easthampton.org]
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2006 1:38 PM
To: Nixon, Andrea (DPU)
Subject: CTV 06-1 - Reply Comments

Ms. Nixon,

Please accept this message from the City of Easthampton in response to your electronic mail request;

1. License applications are reviewed by the Mayor within a few days of their receipt and the licensing process would begin within three or four weeks, depending on schedules and information requirements. We have never had an application for a competitive franchise.
2. The city has used a Cable Advisory Committee for its initial licensing with Greater Media and the recent license renewal process with Charter. This group is not a standing committee and is appointed by the Mayor, subject to City Council confirmation. Residents and business persons from the city are invited to apply for appointment to the mayor. If an advisory committee is utilized it takes up to 60 days for posting, appointment and initial organization with application materials and review commencing within 75 to 90 days from receipt.
3. Easthampton has an appointed city attorney but has utilized outside legal and technical assistance for cable television licensing advice. The Mayor negotiates directly with the applicant and has final execution authority.
4. The sitting Mayor has the authority to execute a license at any time during his/her elected term. As a practical matter I would defer a new license application received after the November election to a new mayor who would take office in January.
5. Requiring the applicant to (1) submit a complete application package, (2) mandating full system build-out in the community and (3) requiring competitive franchises to meet or exceed the local access, I-net and PEG support and capital provisions of any existing license would significantly reduce the negotiation period.
6. Having just completed a very lengthy license renewal process with Charter it would probably take us only two or three weeks to determine our specific needs from a competitive franchise. In the instance of not having completed this effort within the past two or three years we would have the committee (75 days) establish one or more public meetings for discussion (60 to 90 days), schedule a formal public hearing (45 days) and provide a formal recommendation for action to the mayor (21 days).
7. Winter 2004 / Spring 2005 - a full review would not be needed for a competitive application in 2006 or 2007. Direct formal negotiations between the Mayor and the applicant could be scheduled to begin in 30 to 45 days from receipt of the application. The duration of the negotiations would be determined by the substance of the issues being negotiated. Agreement to include substantially the same terms as any existing license in the community would reduce the negotiating window substantially, while an applicants refusal to provide for the identified needs of the community would lead to a more protracted negotiation process.
8. Verizon has never applied for a cable television license in Easthampton.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

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